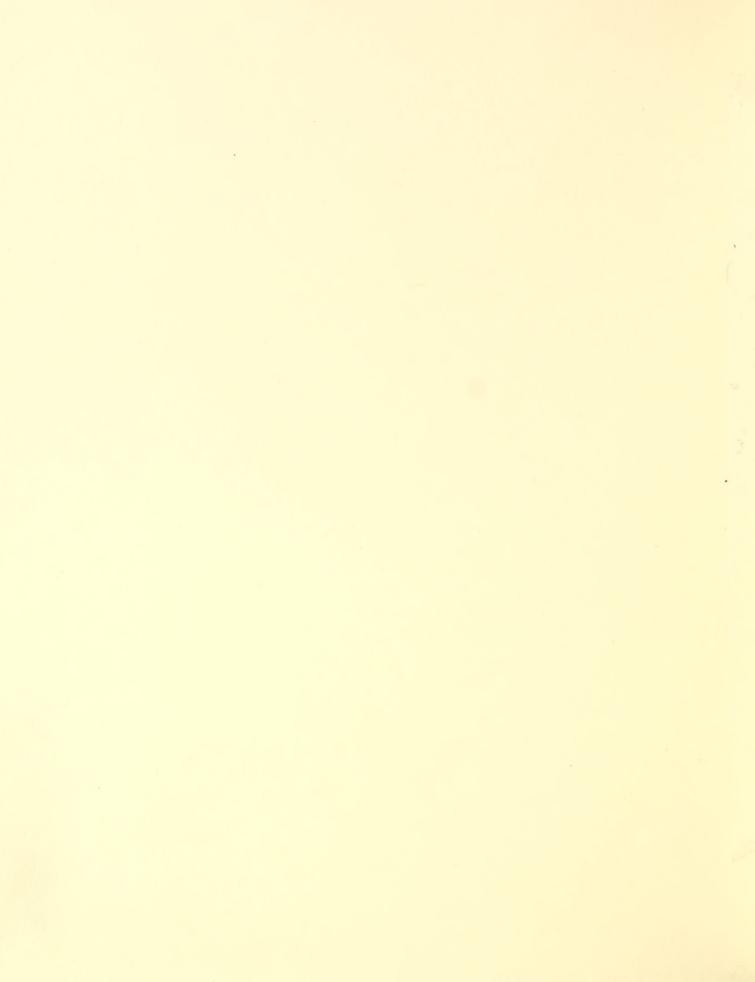
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WHY I HAVE DECIDED TO BE A FARMER

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Ex892haa A radio talk by Hugh Fox, 4-H Club Member, Sevier County, Tennessee, 1024 delivered in the 4-H club program, National Farm and Home Hour, Saturday, June 2, 1934, and broadcast by a network of 58 associate NBC radio stations.

My experience as a 4-H club member began four years ago when our county agent came to school and organized a club. I chose tobacco as my project and have grown tobacco each year following. Our problem in growing tobacco is to obtain a high yield of high quality tobacco on a small area of land. I have learned that it takes energy and perserverance to do this, but all of the work has been interesting.

Each year I selected a plot of rich land that had been in clover or grass. I manured it well, and worked it into a good state of cultivation. Fertilizers should vary somewhat according to the type of soil, but club work had taught me that a high content of nitrogen will increase yield and improve the quality of tobacco.

Uniform, thrifty plants are necessary, and in order to have them ready at the right time, we prepare the plant bed not later than the middle of February. It requires quite as much skill to produce the right kind of plant to set in the field as it does to produce high quality tobacco.

My reward has been a yield per acre of more than double our state average, a price much above the average market price, and a training that will be worth much in the future. The average yield for the four years has been at the rate of 1920 pounds per acre and the price received averaged a little more than 20 cents a pound. Anyone who is familiar with the details of growing tobacco will understand why I am so well pleased with these results. I am saving what I have made to help pay my school expenses.

Other club activities have been interesting. It has been an advantage to meet all 4-H club boys and girls over Sevier county. We meet at picnics in the summer and fairs in the fall and hear discussions on how to handle club projects. At club picnics we have all kinds of interesting sports and amusements. At fairs we study the exhibits of other club girls and boys and learn something that way. I have exhibited at the fair each year and have been fortunate in winning first and second prizes.

Conditions are changing just as fast in agriculture as in commerce. Methods that were in common use a generation ago are totally inadequate now for the successful and economical production of crops and livestock. As club boys, we can see that the next generation of farmers must produce more per acre or livestock unit. They must also keep costs as low as possible.

This is why we are taking advantage of instructions from our County Agents and Experiment Stations. With this as an interesting challenge it would be easy to see "Why I have decided to be a farmer." What I would like to do in the future would be to own a good farm in East Tennessee and to operate it scientifically with modern equipment.

No other business now is called upon to face so great a variety of problems, and to meet so many lines of scientific work as the farmer. A well regulated home is the best institution on earth, but it requires planning, family team-work the year round to make farming a good business and a good home. But as a reward for these efforts we can usually have good health, freedom, remain close to nature, and have a fair amount of time for recreation and cultural activities.

